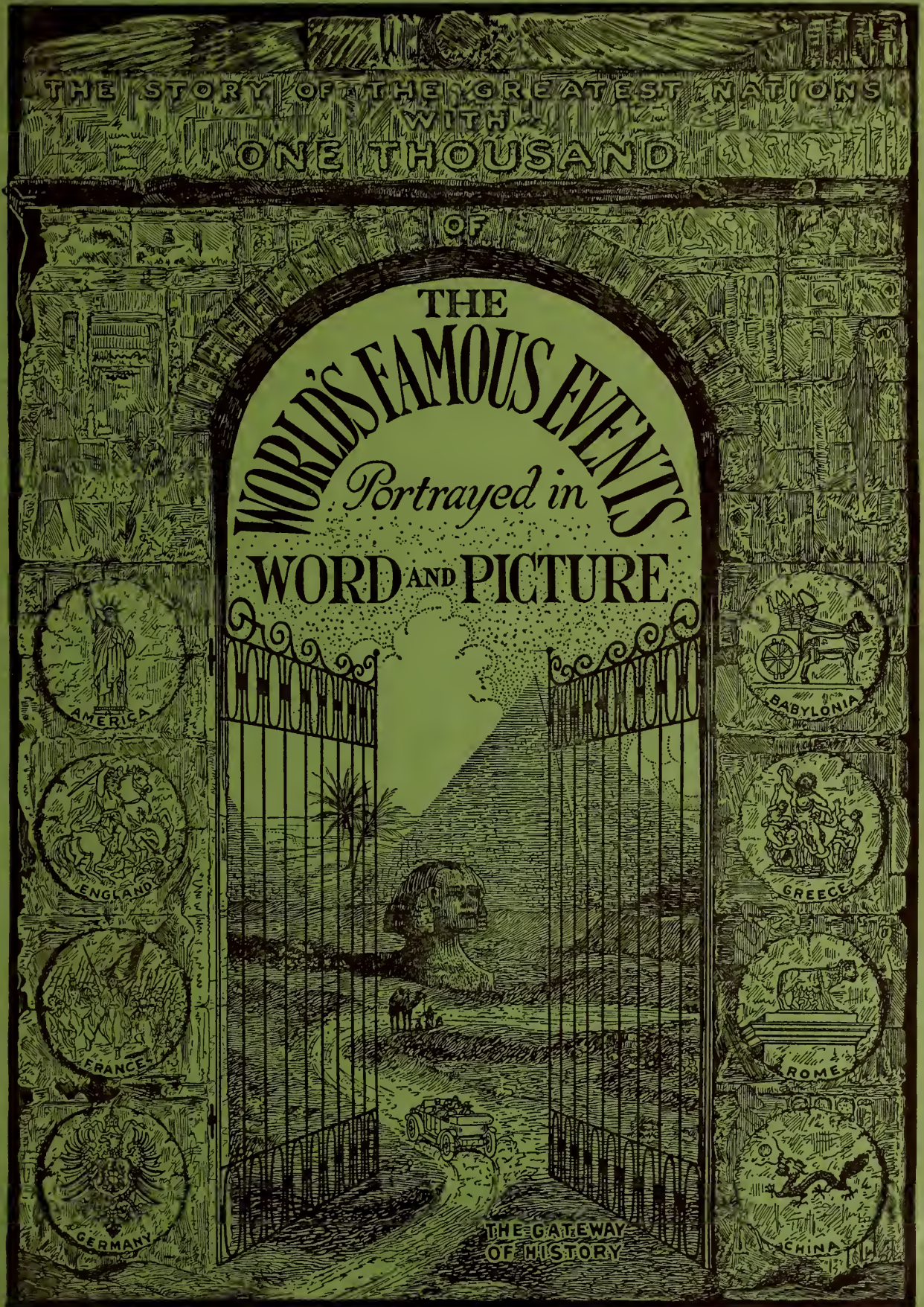
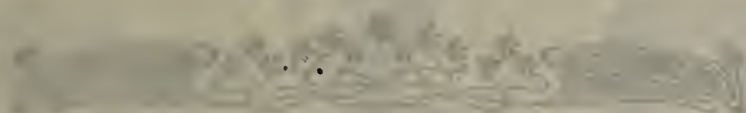


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## THE NEW YORK

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IN SENATE, JANUARY 18, 1877.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE.

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## THE EARLY EMPERORS

(The Rulers of Rome to the End of the "Twelve Cæsars," Who Were Satirized]  
by Suetonius)

*A series of portrait busts drawn specially for this work*

CALIGULA was murdered by the officers of his palace after a reign of only four years; and the conspirators promptly raised in his place his feeble and timid uncle, Claudius, the brother of Germanicus. The first twelve Cæsars are usually classed together because the great Roman satirist Suetonius, has preserved for us an account of their private lives. As we read in his pages of the excesses of these early Roman emperors, we hesitate which to pause upon; for each one, after the great Julius and Augustus, seems as worthless as the next. Tiberius had been a cruel and suspicious voluptuary; Caligula a murderous madman. Claudius was a mere figurehead, ruled by his palace favorites or his unworthy wives. He had four of these and after he had divorced or executed the first three, the last one poisoned him by means of a dish of mushrooms.

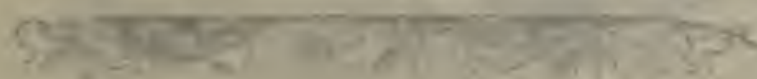
This fourth wife of Claudius was known as "the wicked Agrippina." She really ruled the world in his stead during most of his reign; and when she poisoned him it was to make room for her young son, Nero, so that she might rule in her son's name. Nero started as Caligula had done, with the promise of being a good ruler. He had been educated by the great philosopher and moralist Seneca, and was an apt scholar. But Agrippina encouraged her son in every form of foul dissipation so that he should leave the empire in her hands. She thus well earned her rank in notoriety among these wicked Cæsars.













### “ THUMBS DOWN! ”

(The Emperor Nero Leads the Roman People in Giving the Sign of Death for a Defeated Gladiator)

*From a painting by Wilhelm Peters, a contemporary Norwegian artist*

THE good resolutions of Nero's early reign were soon forgotten. The young men who at this period succeeded one after another to the Roman throne were all poisoned in spirit by the almost superhuman power of their position. Life and death over all mankind were in their hands, and they soon forgot the meaning of life and death. They slew heedlessly, thoughtlessly, whoever annoyed them. And the sycophants who crowded round them cringed in fear and applauded each new atrocity.

Nero became the most terrible tyrant the civilized world has ever known. His one care was to keep the Roman populace content, lest they rise in sudden fury and destroy him. So he gave them food and amusements: “Bread and Circuses” was the well-known Roman cry. All the rest of the world was taxed that this one city might revel in idleness. Gorgeous gladiatorial shows were given almost constantly; and these still further coarsened and brutalized the Roman mind. When two gladiators fought in the circus and one was overcome, the victor looked to the audience to decide if he should slay his foe or spare him. Their sign was the turning of their thumbs, and once in a great while if the defeated man had fought well they raised their thumbs upward and so saved him. But usually the signal given was “thumbs down,” which meant death. Nero was an eager spectator at these contests and by him usually sat his favorite wife Poppæa, as evil as he.











THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF LONDON  
FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY  
TO THE PRESENT TIME

I have been much concerned to see, that the History of this City, which is so famous for its Antiquity, and so rich in its Remains, has hitherto been so little known, and so imperfectly described. I have therefore undertaken this Work, which I hope will be useful to the Public, and will give a more complete and accurate Account of this City, than any former History has done. I have been assisted by several learned Men, who have been much conversant in the History and Antiquities of this City, and who have been much conversant in the History and Antiquities of this City, and who have been much conversant in the History and Antiquities of this City.







### NERO GREETES HIS MOTHER'S BODY

(Having Ordered his Mother's Murder, He Glories in the Deed)

*From a painting by Frederick Klein-Chevalier of Rome*

**I**T was not possible that two such evil and grasping persons as Nero and his mother Agrippina should long live in harmony. They were soon threatening each other, and weaving plots. The young emperor saw that he would never really be master of the world while she lived; besides he wanted to marry Poppæa and Agrippina intrigued against it. So Nero determined on his mother's death. He had a ship built in such a fashion that it would suddenly fall all to pieces, and he then placed his mother in it for a pleasure trip. She escaped death by swimming; and Nero, knowing well that his life or hers must now pay forfeit, sent soldiers to slay her.

Seldom has so revolting a performance disgraced the world. To be sure of his mother's death, Nero had her hacked and disfigured body brought before him. He pretended sorrow for her death; yet called on the crowd of flatterers around him to rejoice with him at the danger he had escaped. He then sent a memorial to the Senate justifying his mother's death by accusing her of every form of crime, all that she had committed and many she had not. Every evil of his reign and of that of her husband Claudius was charged against her. The fawning Senate voted approval of Nero's crime; and the hardened mob of Rome cheered him with furious enthusiasm.













## NERO SINGS WHILE ROME BURNS

(The Cold-hearted Emperor Seeks to Display His Poetic Ability amid the Flames)

*From the great diorama at Leipzig, painted by Edmund Berninger*

**D**URING Nero's reign occurred the great fire which burned Rome to the ground. Nero was suspected of kindling the fire himself, so that he might watch it. The Emperor had indeed often expressed a wish to see and gather poetic inspiration from some vast conflagration; for he greatly admired himself as a poet and musician. It is said that while the city burned he stood with his lyre upon the portico of his palace on the Palatine hill and chanted a frenzied song about the similar destruction of ancient Troy.

After the fire Nero felt, or at least pretended, great pity for its desolated victims and went among them with words of condolence and liberal gifts of money. He, however, took advantage of the destruction of the ancient buildings to grasp a vast amount of land for himself, and erected on it in the midst of Rome his wonderful "Golden House." This is said to have been three miles long, and to have contained within it a farm, a lake, vistas of distant woods, and a forest through which roamed enormous numbers of wild animals.

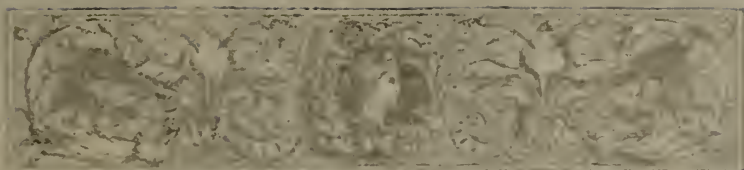
The remainder of Rome benefited in one way by the fire, for it was rebuilt with much broader streets and finer buildings. Indeed, all through Roman history repeated fires swept the city, and new structures were always rising upon the ruins of the old.











THE FIRST CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

Исследования в области биологии и экологии животных, проводимые в последние десятилетия, свидетельствуют о том, что в настоящее время в мире наблюдается тенденция к снижению численности многих видов животных, обитающих в водоемах. Это связано с загрязнением водоемов, сокращением площади водоемов, а также с изменением климата. В результате этого многие виды животных, обитающих в водоемах, находятся на грани вымирания. Поэтому необходимо принимать меры по защите животных, обитающих в водоемах, и по восстановлению их численности.





## THE FIRST CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

(Nero Burns the Christians as Torches in His "Golden House")

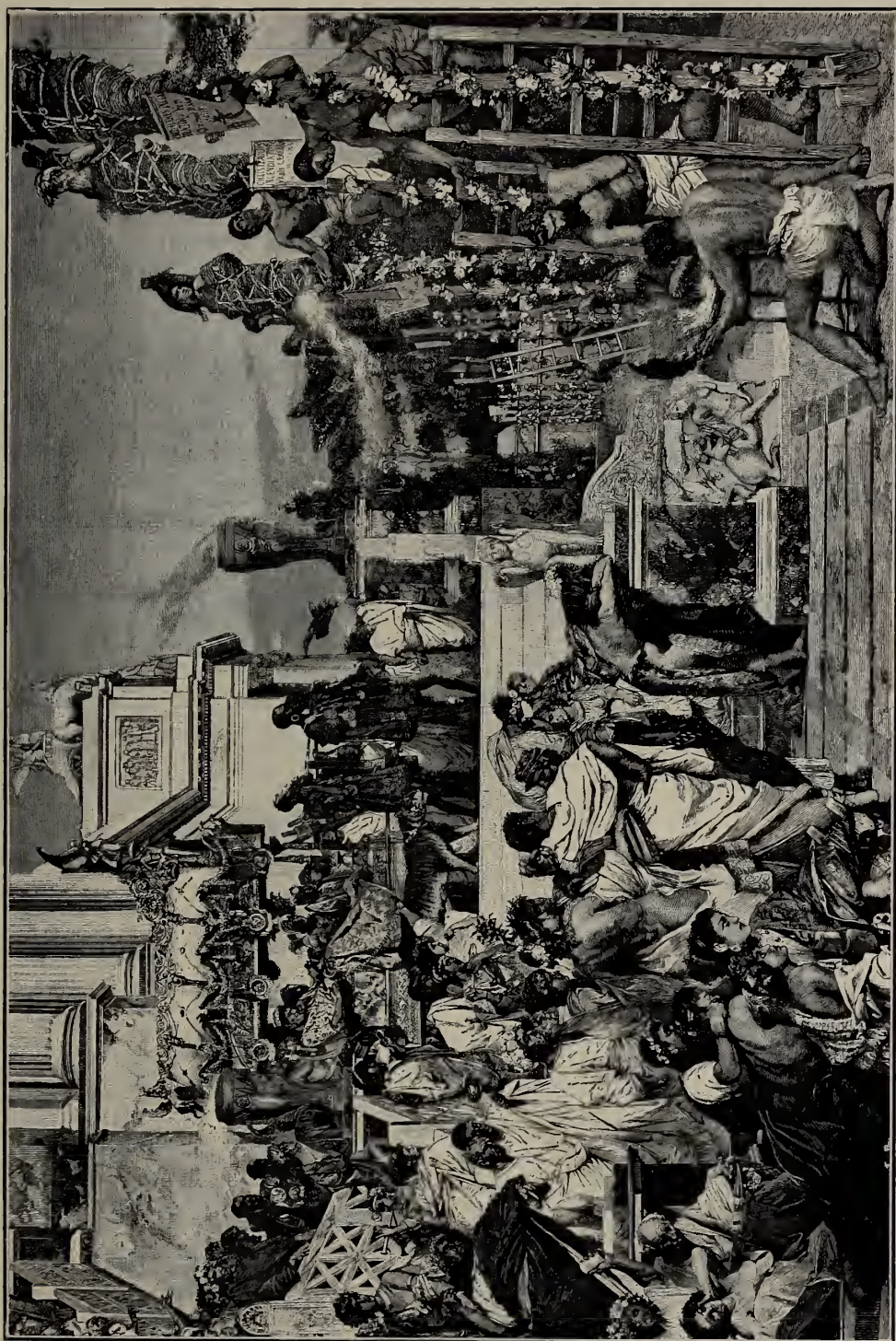
*From the painting by Henry de Siemieradzki, the noted Polish artist  
(1843-1904)*

**D**ESPITE Nero's pose of sympathy with the sufferers from the great fire, the suspicion that he had caused or at least approved of it grew so general, that he determined on an awful means of diverting suspicion from himself. He accused the Christians of having started the blaze.

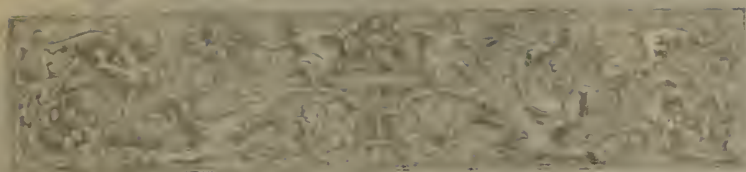
The Christians had by this time, some thirty-five years after the martyrdom of Christ, become a widespread religious sect. The faith had appealed very little to the proud and licentious Romans, but had deeply moved the downtrodden masses of the enslaved nations. Thus it was a "slaves' faith," and the slaves were suspected by their Roman masters of including under the cloak of their new religion all sorts of plans for freedom and of plots against Rome's supremacy. Hence the mob of Rome accepted readily enough Nero's outcry that the Christians had burned the city; and there started against the members of the sect the first of those terrible persecutions by which the early ages tried their faith. Thousands of them were slain by torture. The Emperor delighted in watching the agonies which the Christians so bravely endured; he had them wrapped in inflammable tar and set up as torches throughout the gardens of his "Golden House." He thought to crush the new faith by his cruelty; but the heroic endurance of the martyrs Christianized the whole world of Europe.















## NERO'S DEATH

(The Soldiers Sent to Arrest the Monster Find Him Dying)

*From the painting by E. Kaempffer of Germany*

**E**VEN the submissive Roman world felt itself so outraged that it turned at last against this monster of an emperor. Three generals, commanding the legions in three different parts of the world, rebelled against him. At that, his own "prætorian" guard took courage to reject him. The Senate, seizing eagerly on the opportunity, declared Nero deposed and sentenced him to death by torture.

In his last hours Nero proved himself as timid and abject as he had been brutal and merciless. He fled from Rome and hid in a cellar, but he could not believe that death could really be intended for him, the sumptuous master of all life. He was only thirty-two; and he believed himself an artistic genius. When he learned that he was actually to be scourged to death, he wept and raged in cowardly terror. He started to commit suicide, but had not the courage. Finally, just as the soldiers discovered his hiding place and broke in upon him, he got a servant to slay him. His last words were spent in protest that the world could not afford to lose so splendid an artist as himself. Thus it was on his music and poetry that he chiefly prided himself in his last moments.

Nero was the last emperor who belonged in any relation to the family of the great Caesar. The following emperors merely adopted the name as a sort of general title, and from it come our modern titles of Kaiser and Czar.













## VITELLIUS TORN BY THE MOB

(An Emperor Seized and Slain in the Streets of Rome)

*From a painting by George Rochegrosse, the modern French master*

THE deposition of Nero left the Roman world headless, but not for long. The armies which in Gaul, in Spain and in the East had declared him deposed, now each proclaimed its own general as emperor. The legions of Galba, the commander in Spain marched upon Rome, and the effeminate Romans hastened to declare Galba emperor. So here was the Roman world become a purely military autocracy, in which the ancient city of Rome could do nothing but accept the voice of the army. The rough soldiers were many of them not even Italians, but Spaniards or Gauls, or even Germans. Having tasted their power in making Galba emperor, they presently deposed and slew him, and elevated another ruler, Otho. Then came other legions from Germany, and destroyed Otho, and made an emperor of their own general, Vitellius. Galba had reigned but seven months, and Otho three; Vitellius lasted for eight months.

The legions of the East had declared for their general Vespasian as emperor; but they could not reach Rome so quickly as the others. Had Vitellius been a Roman of the ancient stamp, he would have organized his forces and prepared for civil war against Vespasian; but he was in truth a mere man of straw, tossed by chance to the top of the world. Vitellius spent his brief months of power in carousing, and when the legions of the East at last reached Rome for battle, he fled in secret from his palace. He was found sneaking through the streets; and the Roman mob, in their frenzy at their danger and his desertion, literally tore him to pieces.











VEPASPASIAN PLANS THE COLOSSEUM

The Emperor in the ... in Arc...

*Journal of the American Medical Association*





## VESPASIAN PLANS THE COLOSSEUM

(The Emperor in Discussion with his Architect)

*From a painting by Paul Siberg at Rome*

**V**ESPASIAN succeeded in doing what the three transitory emperors, Galba, Otho and Vitellius, had failed in; he established himself firmly as the military ruler of a military empire. At the time of the uprising against Nero, he had been the tyrant's general in Judea engaged in a terrible war against the Jews. He left to his son Titus the task of conquering Jerusalem, while he himself marched to the overthrow of Vitellius and took possession of Rome.

Vespasian proved a truly noble man and emperor, and also one of rare ability. His reign lasted only eleven years, for he was nearly sixty when he reached the throne. But those eleven years sufficed to enable him to place the Roman world on a new and more enduring basis. He suppressed the tumultuous and licentious soldiery, who under his feeble and evil predecessors had been ravaging all the world. He restored law and order everywhere. Then instead of squandering the vast revenues of the government in debauchery, he devoted them to the rebuilding of devastated Rome. He became a mighty builder, his masterpiece in this line being the celebrated Colosseum, the construction of which he is seen planning in our picture. The Colosseum was begun by Vespasian and finished by his son and successor Titus.















## THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS

(The Day Turned into a Night of Horror)

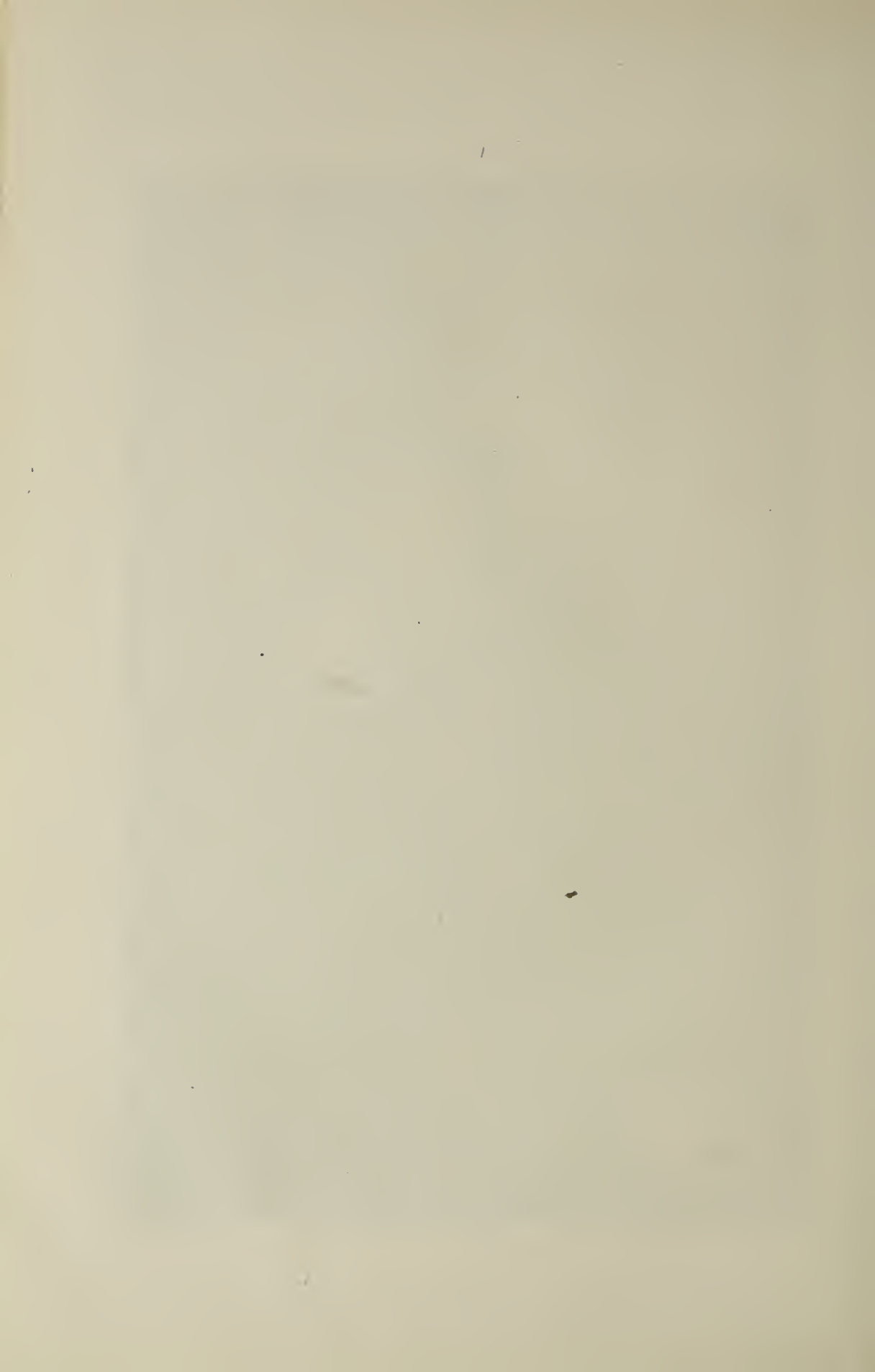
*From the painting by Hector Le Roux, the noted French historical painter*

UNDER the reign of Vespasian's son Titus, occurred that awful catastrophe, the destruction of Pompeii, Herculaneum and other cities by the great eruption of Vesuvius. This happened in the year 79 after Christ, the very year of Trajan's accession. The disaster was widely accepted as an omen; for Trajan was not beloved and trusted as his father had been, and men feared that his coming into power would mean a return to the evil days of the earlier emperors. But when the Vesuvian destruction came, Titus proved his nobility by his absolute devotion to the sufferers and the generosity with which he expended the revenues of the empire for their relief. The city of Rome is two hundred miles from Vesuvius, but so stupendous was the volcanic convulsion, so widespread the darkness it caused, that even in Rome people fled to ships to escape what seemed the destruction of the world.

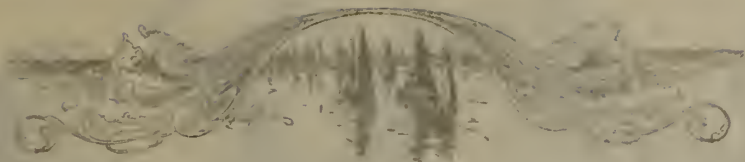
Titus welcomed all the homeless and penniless fugitives to the capital; but there a pestilence broke out so terrible that for weeks ten thousand people died every day. Then there came another great fire upon Rome. Through all these appalling disasters Titus was the mainstay of his people. They came to love him even more than they had his father. But he died, worn out with his efforts, after a reign of only two years.







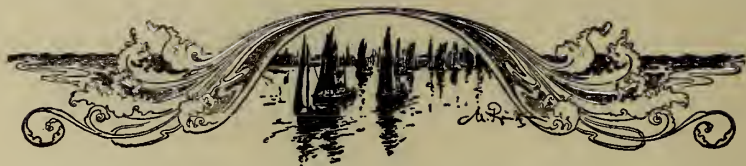




## COMMISSION AND THE FOLLOWING EMPERORS

The Portland Bureau of the Post Office





## DOMITIAN AND THE FOLLOWING EMPERORS

(The Portrait Busts of the Later Emperors)

*From the Roman statues, drawn specially for the present work*

OF all the Roman emperors of this period we have excellent portrait busts and statues, so that we can even to-day see the men as they really lived, and judge their characters by their physiognomy. Titus was succeeded by his brother Domitian, who proved as wicked as his father and brother had been noble. He was called "the second Nero," but rather resembled Tiberius in being secret and dark and seeking solitude, than Nero who desired admiration and company. Rome endured Domitian for fourteen years, partly through love of his two predecessors but more through fear of his savagery. Then there was a conspiracy in his palace, and he was slain. The Roman Senate publicly praised his slayers, and had his name erased from all public monuments, whereon he had, like Caligula, inscribed himself as a god. He claimed to be the son of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom.

People now so dreaded the tyranny of an evil emperor that the election of Domitian's successor was left entirely to the Senate. Its members after careful deliberation selected Nerva, an aged Roman of dignity and high repute, who died shortly and was followed by Trajan, Hadrian and the Antonine emperors. All these were chosen or approved by the Senate, and their reigns constitute what was known as the "golden age" of the Roman Empire. Warned by the horrors of the earlier days, the "good emperors" ruled moderately and wisely.













## THE GAMES OF TRAJAN

(The Chariot Races which He Substituted for Butcheries in Celebrating His Great Victories)

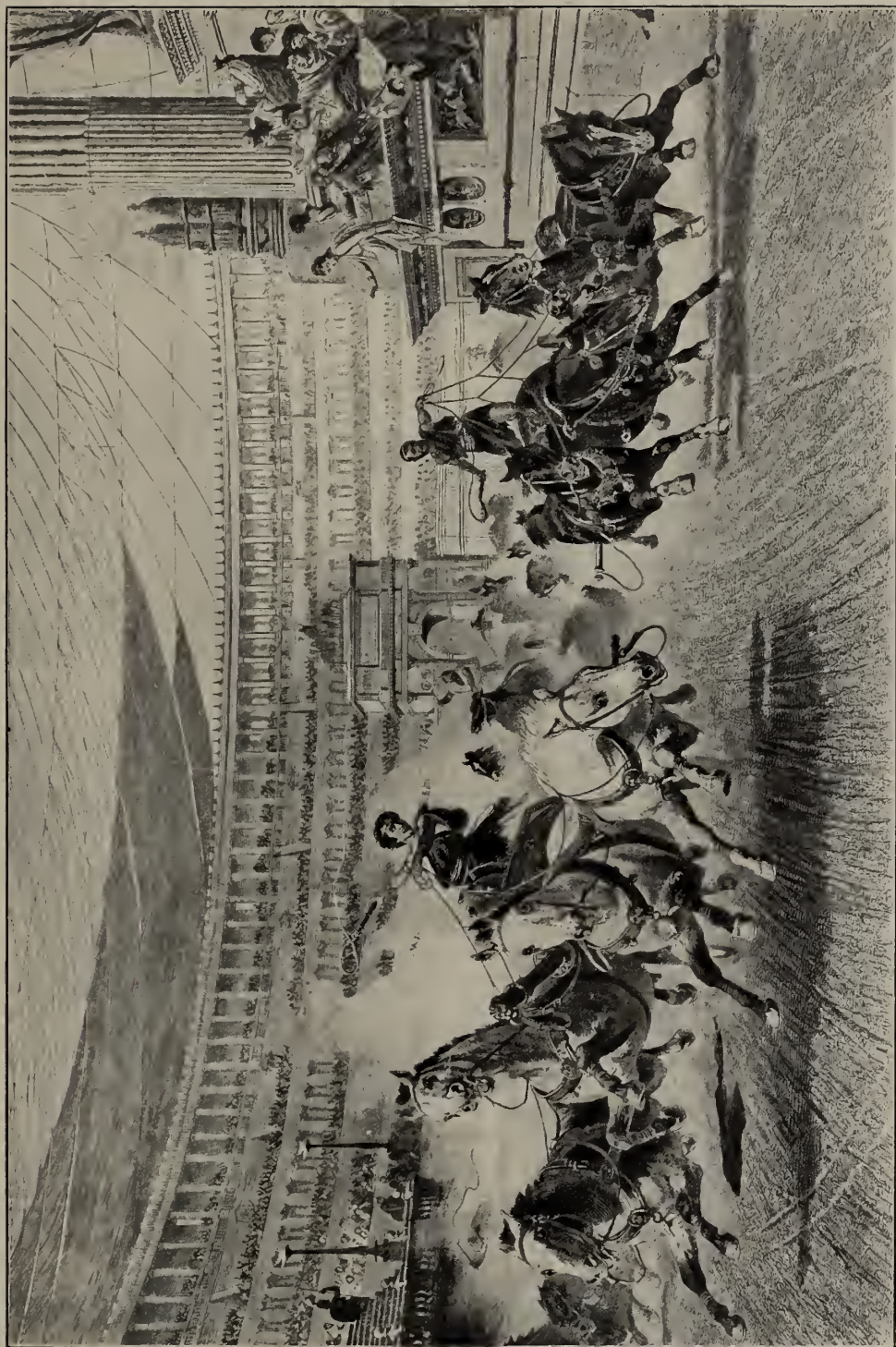
*From a contemporary English sketch of the Circus Maximus*

TO Trajan, who, as we have said, was elected emperor after the brief reign of Nerva, belongs the honor of having brought about this "golden age" of Rome. He was of Spanish birth, being the first emperor who was not born in Italy. To the commander of his prætorian guards, Trajan, on his accession, gave a sword with the famous quotation. "Take this and use it, for me while I do right, against me if I do evil." He reëstablished the military glory of Rome, extending her power and empire on every frontier until, standing at the farthest edge of conquered Persia, he said "If I were a younger man I would go on like Alexander to the conquest of India."

The victories of Trajan naturally brought great spoils to Rome, as in the days of the first Cæsar. The games with which Trajan celebrated his victories were the most splendid Rome had yet seen. They lasted for four months continually and had at least to modern eyes this great merit, that they were devoted chiefly to contests of skill, chariot races and so on, rather than to the spectacles of mere brutal murder and savage torture by which Nero and Domitian had bestialized the Roman public.

When Trajan died after a reign of twenty years, the Senate conferred on him the title of "the best" of all the emperors.











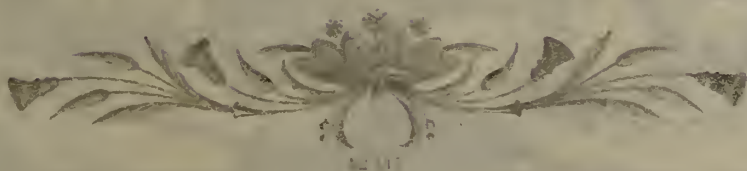
## THE DEATH OF COMMODE

(The Emperor Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius)

From a Latin text by the late Mr. John W. ...

**H**APPY is the nation which has the opportunity of seeing the death of a tyrant. The death of Commodus was the death of a tyrant. He was a man of a violent and uncontrolled temper, who had no regard for the laws or the rights of his subjects. He was a man who had no other aim than to gratify his passions, and who had no other care than to increase his power. He was a man who had no other thought than to destroy the lives of his subjects, and who had no other desire than to see the flames of civil war kindled in his kingdom. He was a man who had no other ambition than to see the throne of his ancestors occupied by his own children, and who had no other wish than to see the empire of the Romans reduced to a province of his own empire. He was a man who had no other religion than to believe that he was the son of Jupiter, and who had no other duty than to obey the commands of his own will. He was a man who had no other friends than the sycophants and flatterers who surrounded him, and who had no other enemies than the virtuous and the brave. He was a man who had no other power than the power of his own sword, and who had no other authority than the authority of his own name. He was a man who had no other life than the life of a tyrant, and who had no other death than the death of a tyrant.

At length his wickedness was brought to a just end. He was killed by his own subjects, who were tired of his tyranny and his blood. His death was a just punishment for his crimes, and it was a great blessing for the empire. His death was a signal for the restoration of the laws and the rights of his subjects, and it was a great example for all tyrants. His death was a great victory for the virtuous and the brave, and it was a great triumph for the empire. His death was a great lesson for all men, and it was a great warning for all tyrants. His death was a great day for the world, and it was a great day for the empire.





## THE DEATH OF COMMODUS

(The Empress Causes Him to be Slain in His Bath)

*From a painting by the contemporary Italian artist, F. Pelez*

“HAPPY is the nation which has no history.” Under Trajan and his successors the Roman world progressed fortunately for nearly a century. No evil ruler rose to disturb things, until in the year 180 the youth Commodus succeeded to the throne as the son and heir of the good emperor Marcus Aurelius. It was commonly said that this bequeathing of the empire to his wicked son was the one bad deed of Aurelius, which outweighed all his good deeds. Commodus had a most evil mother, Faustina, and had inherited all her vices. He delegated all his power to one vicious favorite after another, under whom the world groaned, while he abandoned himself to pleasure. His favorite sport was to appear in the arena as Hercules, and there slay gladiators, who were armed with only imitation weapons against his deadly ones. Or he would fight wild beasts, which were prevented with equal care and watchfulness, from hurting him.

At length his wife discovered her own name on a list of those the emperor had carelessly jotted down to be slain, so she promptly poisoned him to save herself. Lest the drug should prove too feeble, she also introduced a wrestler into the emperor's bathroom, who avenged all the victims of Commodus in the arena by strangling the poisoned emperor while he lay too ill to move.









there were numerous populous suburbs. The walls were pierced for thirty gates. Under Augustus Rome grew into a magnificent city, and he was able to boast that he found it brick and left it marble.

Among the most notable buildings was the Colosseum, as the ruins of the Flavian Amphitheatre are called. It could seat 100,000 spectators, while the Circus Maximus, which was reserved for races, shows, and public games, accommodated 200,000 persons. The Emperor erected theaters and public oaths, as did his successors, as if to lead the people to forget in their enjoyments the loss of their liberty.

We have learned of the Forum, which stood in the valley between the Palatine and Capitoline hills. It was the great market and place for public assembly, and was early decorated with statues of illustrious citizens, which were probably of wood rather than stone. The Comitium was an open platform raised a few steps above the Forum, and, being a meeting-place of the patricians, was furnished with a hall or curia. Opposite to this upon a platform was the rostrum or pulpit from which the orators addressed the patricians. The Forum was surrounded with temples, public offices, and halls for the administration of justice. There too was the famous Temple of Janus, built of bronze by the earliest kings, when the custom was established of closing its gates during peace, but so continuous were the wars of the Romans that during a period of eight centuries the gates were shut only three times.

The Campus Martius was the favorite exercise-ground of the young nobles; on it the elections of magistrates, reviews of troops, and the registration of citizens were held. It was surrounded by a number of fine residences, with ornamental trees and shrubs planted in different parts, and provided with porticoes so that the exercises could be continued in bad weather.

The Pantheon is the only ancient edifice in Rome that has been perfectly preserved, being now known as the Church of Santa Maria Rotonda. It was erected by Agrippa, the son-in-law of Augustus. It is lighted through one aperture, in the centre of the magnificent dome, and was dedicated to all the gods.

The aqueducts of Rome were among its most remarkable structures. Pure water was brought from great distances through these channels, that were supported by massive arches, some of them more than a hundred feet high. Under the different emperors, twenty of these prodigious structures were raised, and they brought to the city an abundance of the purest water for all purposes. Innumerable fountains were thus supplied, many being of great architectural beauty.

The imperial city became in many respects the grandest exhibition the world has ever known of the genius and enterprise of man. Nowhere else

were constructed such immense circuses. These were seven in number, and in addition there were two amphitheatres, five regular theatres, and four hundred and twenty temples. The public baths numbered sixteen, were built of marble, and were the perfection of convenience and luxury, while to these were to be added the triumphal arches, obelisks, public halls, columns, porticoes, and palaces without number.

Speaking now for the whole period of the Empire, let us give some attention to the Roman manners and customs, the account of which we gather from Collier's "Domestic Life in Imperial Rome."

The best-known garment of the Romans was the *toga*, made of pure white wool, and in its shape resembling the segment of a circle. Narrow at first, it was folded so that one arm rested in it as in a sling, but afterward it was draped in broad, flowing folds round the breast and left arm, leaving the right nearly bare. In later times it was not worn on the street, its place being taken by a mantle of warm colored cloth, called the *pallium* or *lacerna*, but it continued to be the Roman full dress, and when the emperor visited the theatre, all present were expected to wear it.

No Roman covered his head, except when on a journey, or when he wished to escape notice, at which times he wore a dark-colored hood, that was fastened to the *lacerna*. When in the house, *soleæ* were strapped to the bare feet, but outside, the *calceus*, closely resembling our shoe, was worn. Every Roman of rank wore on the fourth finger of the left hand a massive signet-ring, while the fops loaded every finger with jewels.

The dress of the Roman women consisted of three parts,—an inner tunic, the *stola*, and the *palla*. The *stola* was the distinctive dress of Roman matrons, and was a tunic with short sleeves, girt round the waist, and ending in a deep flounce which swept the instep. The *palla* was a gay-colored mantle that was worn out-of-doors. It was often bright-blue, sprinkled with golden stars. The most brilliant colors were chosen, so that it will be seen that an assembly of Roman belles in full dress, gleaming with scarlet and yellow, purple and pale green, made a picture whose beauty is not surpassed in our own times. The hair was encircled with a garland of roses, fastened with a gold pin, and pearls and gold adorned the neck and arms.

The chief food of the early Romans was bread and pot herbs; but as prosperity increased, they lost their abstemious habits, and every species of luxury was introduced. When the days of the decline came, the ambition and enjoyment of the rulers, nobles, and wealthy citizens was to gormandize on the richest of viands and the choicest of wines, and there is no surer sign of the decay of a nation or people than when they yield to such gross indulgences.

As with us, the Roman meals were three daily. The *jentaculum* was taken

soon after rising, and consisted of bread, dried grapes or olives, cheese, and perhaps milk and eggs. The *prandium* was the midday meal, when the Roman partook of fish, eggs, and dishes cold, or warmed up from the supper of the night before. Wine was generally drunk, though sparingly. The *cæna* was the principal meal of the day, and corresponded to our modern dinner. Instead of opening with soup as is our custom, eggs, fish, and light vegetables, such as lettuces and radishes, served with palatable sauces, were first eaten and were intended to whet the appetite for what followed. This consisted of the bewildering courses, known as *fercula*, which, among other delicacies, included fish, turbot, sturgeon and red mullet, peacock, pheasant, woodcock, thrush, and the fig-pecker. Venison was popular, and young pork a favorite. When the feaster was through with these, he tackled the dessert of pastry and fruit.

At the table, the Romans did not seat themselves as we do, but low couches were arranged in the form *triclinium*, which made three sides of a square, the open space being left for the convenience of the slaves in removing the dishes. The middle bench was the place of honor. Afterward, round tables came into fashion and the semicircular couches were used. Table-cloths were not employed, but each guest brought a linen bib or napkin, called *mappa*, which he wore over the breast. Knives and forks were unknown, their place being taken by two kinds of spoon,—one, *cochlear*, small and pointed at the end of the handle; the other, *lingula*, larger and of no clearly defined shape. Modern usage has greatly improved on the oil lamps that were used at the late meals. Like the table utensils, they were of fine material and beautiful pattern, but the thick smoke blackened the wall and ceiling, and the pungent oil soaked the table.

During the feast short dresses of bright material were worn instead of the toga. Chaplets were handed round before the drinking began, and were made of roses, myrtle, violets, ivy, and sometimes parsley. The hair of the guests was anointed with fragrant unguents by the slaves, before these chaplets were put on. The drink was mainly wine. Previous to being brought on the table, this was strained through a metal sieve or linen bag filled with snow, and was known as black or white, according to its color. The Falernian, of which we often read, and which was celebrated by Horace, was of a bright amber tint. The diners also drank *mulsum*, a mixture of new wine with honey, and *calda*, made of warm water, wine, and spice.

The Romans were fond of their baths. In the rugged days, nothing suited them better than a cold plunge in the Tiber, which tingled the blood and braced the iron muscles, but this gave place under the Empire to the luxurious system of warm and vapor bathing, sometimes repeated six or eight times a day, with greatly enervating results. The bathers spent hours lolling in the baths and gossiping to their hearts' content.

The Romans found their amusements in the theatre, with its comedies and tragedies, the circus, and the amphitheatre. At the circus, which was really a race-course, they made bets on their favorite horses or charioteers, while in the amphitheatre they revelled in the bloody combats of the gladiators, of which we shall learn more hereafter.

The Roman books were rolls of papyrus, or parchment, written upon with a reed pen, dipped in sepia or lamp-black. The edges were rubbed smooth and blackened; the back of the sheet was often stained yellow, while the ends of the stick on which it was rolled were adorned with knobs of ivory or gilt wood. From the form of the book we have the word *volume*, meaning "a roll." Letters were etched with a sharp-pointed iron, called a *stylus*, on thin wooden tablets coated with wax, and from the instrument employed, we have our word *style*. The letters were then tied up with a linen thread, the knot being sealed with wax and stamped with a ring.

There were three forms of marriage, of which the highest was called *confarreatio*. The bride attired in a white robe with purple fringe, and covered with a brilliant yellow veil, was escorted by torchlight to her future home. A cake was carried in front of her, and she bore a distaff and a spindle with wool. When she reached the flower-wreathed portal, she was lifted over the threshold that she might not risk a stumble, which was an omen of evil. Next, her husband brought fire and water, which she touched, and then, seated on a sheepskin, she received the keys of the house, the ceremony closing with a marriage supper.

The household work was done by slaves. They were few at first, but, as time passed, it was thought a disgrace for a citizen not to have a slave for every separate kind of work. Thus one managed the purse, another the cellar, another the bedrooms, another the kitchen, while there were slaves to attend their masters when they walked abroad. The wealthiest Romans had their readers, secretaries, and physicians, and for amusement there were musicians, dancers, buffoons, and idiots. In the slave-market the unfortunate were bought and sold like cattle, but the beautiful females were disposed of privately and brought prices which often reached several thousand dollars.

The principal apartments of a first-class Roman house were on the ground-floor. Passing through the unroofed vestibule, generally between rows of pleasing statues, one entered the dwelling through a doorway ornamented with ivory, tortoise-shell, and gold, looking down on the word *Salve* (welcome) worked in mosaic marble. He then passed into the *atrium*, or large central reception-room, which was separated from its wings by lines of pillars. Here were placed the ancestral images and the family fireplace, dedicated to the *Lares* or tutelar deities of the house. Beyond lay a large saloon called the



*petrisyle*, whose floor was usually a mosaic of colored marble, tiles, or glass, with the walls covered or painted, with gilt and colored stucco-work on the ceilings and with the window-frames filled with talc or glass. There were bright gardens on the roof, and within the house would be found ivory bedsteads, with quilts of purple and gold; tables of rare and precious wood; sideboards of gold and silver, bearing plate, amber vases, beakers of Corinthian bronze, and exquisitely beautiful glass vessels from Alexandria.

You will bear in mind that these descriptions apply only to the homes of the wealthy, who, with all their extravagance and luxury, lacked many of the comforts found to-day in the humblest modern homes. It followed that the poorer Romans had even less in the way of convenience, and were obliged to get on as best they could.

It was not until the time of Augustus that the literature of Rome became really noteworthy. He gave the Empire the peace and settled condition which enable literature to flourish. A brilliant galaxy of writers consequently gathered round him, and his reign constitutes the world-famous "Augustan age" of literature.

Ennius, called the father of Roman poetry, had lived over a century and a half before, and marks the beginning of Latin literature. He was a native of Calabria, enjoyed the esteem of the most eminent men, among them Scipio Africanus, and attained the honor of Roman citizenship. His poems were highly regarded by Cicero, Horace, and Virgil, and his memory was lovingly cherished by his countrymen.

Plautus was a contemporary of Ennius, and a great comic poet. He produced numerous plays, a few of which have descended to us. His work was immensely popular, for he displayed liveliness, humor, rapid action, and great skill in the construction of his plots. His plays have served as models in some respects for Shakespeare, Molière, Dryden, Addison, and others.

Terentius, the most famous of the comic poets, was a native of Carthage, but was purchased by a Roman senator, who manumitted him because of his handsome person, winning ways, and remarkable talents. His first play was immediately successful, and the author became a favorite among the leading citizens of Rome, and an intimate of the younger Scipio. Six of his comedies have come down to us, and they possess great educational value, for they share with the works of Cicero and Cæsar the honor of being written in the purest Latin.

Cato the elder, or Cato the Censor, as he is called to distinguish him from Cato of Utica, was elected consul, and displayed such remarkable genius in quelling an insurrection in Spain (B.C. 206) that he was honored with a triumph. In B.C. 184, he was elected censor, and was so rigid in the discharge of

his duties that the epithet *Censorius* was applied to him as his surname. He was fanatical in his views, but displayed the highest moral heroism in combating the evils around him. You will remember that it was he who ended every address in the Senate with the exclamation that Carthage must be destroyed. His implacable enmity was caused by what he conceived to be an insult put upon him in the year B.C. 175, when he was sent to Carthage to negotiate concerning the differences between the Carthaginians and the Numidian king, Masinissa. In his eightieth year his second wife bore him a son, who became the grandfather of Cato of Utica. The elder was the author of a number of literary works, but unfortunately his greatest historical production, the "Origines," has been lost, though there have been preserved many fragments of his orations.

These writers with Cicero constitute the entire list of illustrious literary Romans previous to the "Augustan age." Returning to that brilliant period we encounter Virgil, Horace, Sallust, Catullus, and a score of others.

Virgil ranks second only to Homer as an epic poet. He was born on October 15th, B.C. 70, at Andes, a village not far from Mantua. The last and greatest of his works is the "Æneid," which occupied the latter years of his life. Meeting Augustus at Athens on his triumphal return from the East, the poet was persuaded to go back to Rome with him, but he was seized with illness on the road and died in his fifty-second year.

Horace was born in a part of the modern kingdom of Naples, on the 8th of December, B.C. 65. We have learned that when Brutus went to Greece he made Horace a tribune, and he served with the republicans until the "end of all things" came at Philippi, when he made his submission and returned to Rome. Highly accomplished in Greek and Roman literature, he set his genius to the mastering of two great tasks,—the naturalization in Latin of the Greek lyric spirit and the perfect development of the old Roman satire. He attained an artistic success in both objects, and became one of the most influential writers of the world, who will be recognized as such throughout all coming generations. He became the friend of Virgil, and, while still a young man, was introduced to the great Etruscan noble Mæcenas, the intimate friend of Augustus, who endowed him with an estate and honored and encouraged him in every possible way. Horace showed a manly gratitude, and complimented the Emperor on those features of his reign which were worthy. Horace was the author of numerous odes, satires, poems, and epistles, and was witty, good-natured, and one of the most vivacious of song-writers.

Sallust was born B.C. 86 in the Sabine country, and, though a plebeian, rose to distinction, first as a quæstor and afterward as a tribune of the people. His private life was immoral. He was a devoted friend of Cæsar, who in B.C. 47 made him a prætor-elect and thus restored him to the rank of which he had

been deprived. The following year he was made governor of Numidia, where he ruled badly and greatly oppressed the people. The immense fortune which he dishonestly acquired enabled him to retire from political life, and devote his whole time to literary work. His reputation rests upon his historical productions, the principal of which were his history of the conspiracy of Catiline and the Jugurthine War. His writings are powerful and animated, and the speeches which he puts into the mouths of his chief characters are strong and effective. He was the first Roman to write what is now accepted as history.

Lucretius was born in the opening years of the first century before Christ, but comparatively nothing is known of his personal history, one account making him die of poison swallowed because of his infatuation with a woman. The great work on which his fame rests is the "*De Rerum Naturâ*," a philosophical didactic poem in six books. His great aim was to free his countrymen from the trammels of superstition. "Regarded merely as a literary composition, the work named stands unrivalled among didactic poems. The clearness and fulness with which the most minute facts of physical science, and the most subtle philosophical speculations, are unfolded and explained; the life and interest which are thrown into discussions in themselves repulsive to the bulk of mankind; the beauty, richness, and variety of the episodes which are interwoven with the subject-matter of the poem, combined with the majestic verse in which the whole is clothed, render the '*De Rerum Naturâ*,' as a work of art, one of the most perfect which antiquity has bequeathed to us."

Catullus was born at Verona, B.C. 87. His father was an intimate friend of Julius Cæsar, but the son wrote savage attacks upon the great politician. His poems are one hundred and sixteen in number, chiefly consisting of lyrics and epigrams, and have been justly admired for their exquisite grace and beauty of style, though many are tainted with gross indecency. He was equally successful in the higher style of writing, especially in his odes, of which only four have been preserved. He resided in his country villa, surrounded by aristocratic friends, and was one of the staunchest supporters of the senatorial party.

Of the life of Livy, the renowned historian, we know little except that he was born early in the latter half of the century before Christ. He lived to his eightieth year, and, having been born under the Republic, died under the Emperor Tiberius. The great history by which he is remembered was probably written shortly before the birth of the Saviour. His fame was such that a Spaniard travelled from Gades to Rome to see him. His work ranks as one of the masterpieces of human composition. Originally, his Roman history was comprised in one hundred and forty-two books, divided into decades, but only thirty books and a part of five more exist.

"In classing Livy in his proper place among the greatest historians of the

ancient and modern world, we must not think of him as a critical or antiquarian writer—a writer of scrupulously calm judgment and diligent research. He is pre-eminently a man of beautiful genius, with an unrivalled talent for narration, who takes up the history of his country in the spirit of an artist, and makes a free use of the materials lying handiest, for the creation of a work full of grace, color, harmony, and a dignified ease. Professor Ramsay has remarked, that he treats the old tribunes just as if they were on a level with the demagogues of the worst period; and Niebuhr censures the errors of the same kind into which his Pompeian and aristocratic prepossessions betray him. But this tendency, if it was ever harmful, is harmless now, and was closely connected with that love of ancient Roman institutions and ancient Roman times which at once inspired his genius, and was a part of it. And the value of his history is incalculable, even in the mutilated state in which we have it, as a picture of what the great Roman traditions were to the Romans in their most cultivated period.”

Ovid was born B.C. 43, at Sulmo, in the country of the Peligni. Although he was educated for the law, his poetical genius drew him aside. Acquiring considerable property through the death of his father, he went to Athens and mastered the Greek language. He was gay, indolent, and licentious, and, probably because of his disgraceful intrigues, he was ordered by the emperor to leave Rome in the year A.D. 9, for Tomi, near the delta of the Danube and on the limit of the Empire. Augustus refused to shorten his term of exile, and Ovid died in the lonely place in his sixtieth year. It was there that he composed most of his poems to while away the dismal hours. He possessed a masterly style of composition, a vigorous fancy, a fine eye for color, a very musical versification, and, despite an occasional slovenliness of style, he has been a favorite of the poets from the time of Milton to the present. A large number of his works have come down to us, but more have been lost, the one best known to antiquity being his tragedy “Medea.”

Other famous writers follow, after the Augustan age. Pliny the Elder was born in the north of Italy in A.D. 23. He went to Rome when quite young, and his high birth and ample means secured him every advantage in education and advancement. He served in Germany as the commander of a troop of cavalry, but spent the greater part of the reign of Nero in authorship, producing a number of miscellaneous works. In the year 79, he was stationed off Misenum, in command of the Roman fleet, when the great eruption of Vesuvius occurred which buried Herculaneum and Pompeii. Eager to examine the phenomenon more closely, he landed at Stabizæ, and was suffocated by the noxious fumes. His nephew, Pliny the Younger, attributed this misfortune to his corpulent and asthmatic habit, since none of his companions perished. Of Pliny’s numerous works, only his “*Historia Naturalis*” has come down to us. It has



many faults, lacking scientific merit and philosophical arrangement, but it is a monument of industry and research, and supplies us with details on a variety of subjects which could be obtained in no other way.

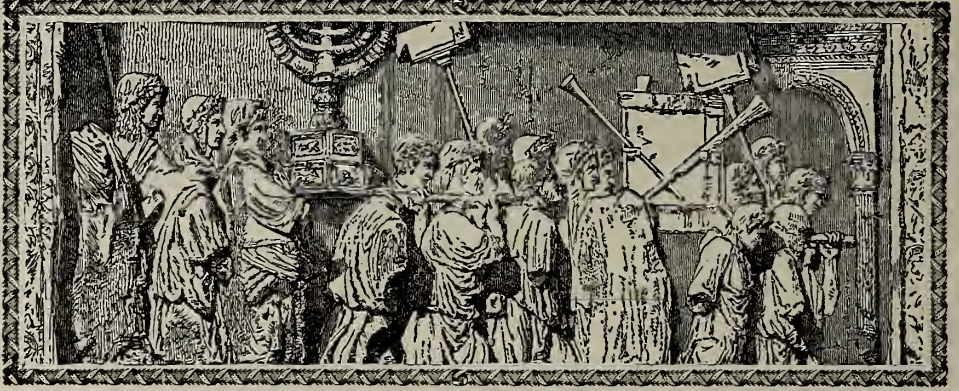
Juvenal, the satirist, was a native of Aquinum, a Volscian town. The date of his birth is unknown, but he wrote during the time of Domitian (81-96 A.D.) and lived many years later. The sixteen of his satires which still survive hold the first rank in satirical literature, and are invaluable as pictures of the Roman life of the Empire.

Tacitus is remembered as receiving marks of favor from the emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, but there is no record of the date and place of his birth, nor of the time of his death, which was in the early part of the second century. He was one of the greatest of historians. In love of truth and integrity of purpose none surpassed him, and he possessed a remarkable conciseness of phrase and the power of saying much and implying more in one or two strokes of expression.

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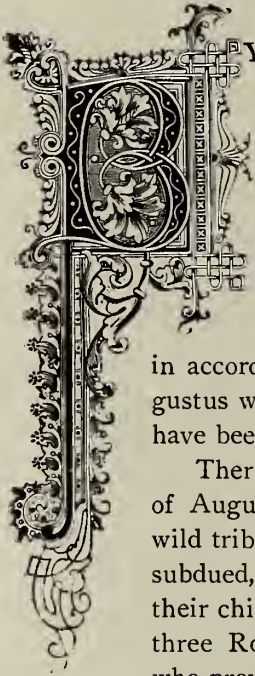
ANCIENT CAMEO REPRESENTING THE APOTHEOSIS OF AUGUSTUS



SPOILS OF JERUSALEM—FROM THE COLUMN OF TRAJAN

## Chapter XXXIX

### THE EMPERORS' PERIOD OF POWER



**B**Y far the most impressive event of the reign of Augustus was the birth of the Saviour at the little village of Bethlehem, in Judea,—an event that marked the most momentous crisis in the spiritual history of the world. Although early tradition assigned this to the year 753 of Rome, it really occurred four years earlier, as has been explained in the Introduction. This human appearance of Christ took place at the time when there was general peace throughout the earth, and was, therefore, in accordance with Scripture prophecy. The government of Augustus was tranquil, and there were no civil wars, though there may have been some unrest on the frontiers.

There was, indeed, only one serious war during the forty years of Augustus' supreme power. This was with the Germans, the wild tribes which Cæsar had defeated. They had never been fully subdued, and in the year B.C. 9 they rose in sudden rebellion under their chief Hermann, or, as the Romans called him, Arminius. The three Roman legions along the Rhine were commanded by Varus, who proved both reckless and incompetent. He marched his entire force into the wild German forests where they were surrounded by the rebels, and, after three days of savage fighting, exterminated. Great was the consternation at Rome. Augustus beat his head against the wall, crying, "Varus, Varus, give me back my legions." The people feared the Germans would imitate the ancient Gauls and make a terrible raid upon Rome. But the Ger-

mans were busy quarrelling among themselves; fresh legions were hastily raised, and the danger passed away.

Augustus died in A.D. 14, and was succeeded by his step-son, Tiberius Claudius Nero, known as Tiberius, who was born B.C. 42. Jesus Christ was crucified in the nineteenth year of this reign. It was at Antioch, in Syria, where Saul and Barnabas taught the faith, that the believers first received the name of "Christians." Then began those wonderful missionary journeys of the Apostles, which carried the gospel through Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy, and Rome became the capital of Christendom. Silently but irresistibly the true faith spread, first among the Jews, then among the Greeks, or eastern, and the Latin, or western, Gentiles, until it became the one true and accepted religion throughout the civilized world.

When Tiberius ascended the throne, his manliness and moderation gave promise of a prosperous reign, but he was jealous from the first of his popular nephew Germanicus, who was intrusted with important commands in Dalmatia and Pannonia, and raised to the consulate before he was thirty years of age. Two years later he repressed a terrible revolt of the Germanic legions, who wished to salute him as emperor. In a campaign against the Germans, he ousted Hermann their chief, A.D. 16, recaptured the eagles lost by Varus, and earned for himself the surname of *Germanicus*. Tiberius summoned him home, and he returned as a victorious general. The Senate awarded him a magnificent triumph, in which Thusnelda, wife of Arminius, preceded his car with her children. Germanicus died in A.D. 19, from poison, as he declared, and then Tiberius revealed himself as moody and irresolute, with scarcely a trace of affection or sympathy.

He became a tyrant. The number and amount of taxes were increased, all power was taken from the people and Senate. Prosecutions for high treason were based on mere words or even looks that gave displeasure to the Emperor, who found thus a convenient method of ridding himself of those who displeased him. As years advanced, he abandoned the real government of the empire to Ælius Sejanus, commander of the Prætorian Guards, and wallowed in licentious excesses at his villa in Capri, until, worn out by debauchery, he ended his infamous life in the year 37, his death being hastened either by poison or suffocation.

There were many Roman emperors whose history is not worth the telling. Some held the throne but a short time, and others played an insignificant part in the annals of the Empire. We add the list, with the dates of their reigns, and in the following pages will recall the most important events connected with their rule.

Caius Cæsar, or Caligula, as he is more generally known, was in his twenty-



fifth year when he became emperor. He was suspected of helping the death of Tiberius, who had appointed him his heir. He was another of the diabolical miscreants produced by licentiousness and debauchery. It took him just one year to expend the three million dollars left by Tiberius, and he confiscated and murdered and banished until it is only charitable to believe he was afflicted with insanity. He enlivened his feasts by having those whom he disliked tortured in his presence, and once expressed the wish that all the Roman people had but one neck that he might decapitate Rome at a single blow. He stabled his favorite horse in the palace, fed him at a marble manger with gilded oats (how disgusted the animal must have been!), and afterward raised him to the consulship. As a climax to his foolery, he declared himself a god and had temples erected and sacrifices offered to his family. The people stood all this and much more with incredible patience, but finally formed a conspiracy and removed him by assassination from the earth which he had cumbered too long.

Claudius I., fortunately for himself, was suspected of imbecility, else Caligula would have "removed" him. As it was, he might have done well had he not in A.D. 42, when terrified by hearing of a conspiracy against his life, abandoned himself wholly to the will of his ferocious wife Messalina, who robbed and slew with a mercilessness worthy of the former emperor. Abroad, however, the Roman armies were victorious. Mauritania became a Roman province, progress was made in Germany, and the conquest of Britain was begun. The experience of Claudius in the matrimonial line was discouraging. Messalina was executed for her crimes, after which he married Agrippina, who poisoned him in 54, so as to make sure of the succession of her son Nero. After the death of Claudius, he was deified, though the sacrilege surely could not have benefited him much.

And now comes another of those infamous wretches, with which an all-wise Ruler finds it expedient to chastise mankind at certain intervals. This was Nero, whose full name was Nero Claudius Cæsar Drusus Germanicus. He began his reign well, and but for the baleful influence of his mother, Agrippina, might have continued in the good way, under the tutelage of Seneca the philosopher. He soon yielded, however, to temptation or to his natural inclinations, and plunged headlong into tyranny, extravagance, and every species of debauchery that human ingenuity could devise. Falling out with his mother, he caused her to be assassinated to please one of his mistresses, the wife of Otho, afterward emperor. To marry this woman Nero had put to death his own wife; now his mother followed, and the servile Senate actually issued an address congratulating the matricide on her death.

The rebellion which broke out in Britain under Queen Boadicea was sup-



pressed in 61, but the war against the Parthians the next year was unsuccessful. In July, 64, occurred the great conflagration in Rome, by which two-thirds of the city was reduced to ashes. It is recorded that while the conflagration was raging, Nero watched it from a turret in his palace, singing verses to the music of his lyre, and it is the general belief that it was his hand that kindled the flames. Sated with every known indulgence, he had set out to discover some new kind of enjoyment.

Could his guilt have been established, the populace would have wreaked quick vengeance upon him. The cowardly miscreant was scared, and strove to turn aside the suspicion whose whispers had reached his ears. He traversed the stricken streets with hypocritical expressions of sympathy, and gave away all the money he could steal to help the sufferers; but seeing the necessity of directing distrust toward some one, he cunningly chose the new sect known as Christians, who had become numerous and active in Rome. Scores were arrested, and he condemned them to be burned. Many were wrapped in pitched cloth and set up in his own gardens, which were illuminated by the awful human "torches." It was not the Emperor's pity, but that of the refuse of the city, which finally brought the horrible spectacles to an end. Among the victims of these tortures were probably St. Paul, St. Peter, and Seneca.

Nero was guilty of atrocities that cannot even be hinted at. Suspecting Seneca and the poet Lucian of conspiring against him, he took the lives of both. One day, because he felt out of sorts, he kicked his wife to death. Being refused by another lady, he had her slain by way of teaching her a lesson, and then secured another wife by killing an obstinate husband.

The blow which brought Nero low, came from an unexpected quarter. In the year 68, the Gallic and Spanish legions revolted, and the Prætorian Guards followed, all animated by the purpose of making Galba, one of their commanders, Emperor. Their approach to the city heartened the Senate and terrified Nero, whose frame shivered and whose teeth rattled with terror. He fled at night to the villa of one of his freedmen, learning which the Senate proclaimed him a public enemy. Being warned that his death by torture had been ordered, and hearing the sound of the approaching hoof-beats of the guard, he at last mustered enough courage to place a sword to his breast and order his slave to drive it home.

Galba entered Rome on January 1st, 69, and was accepted as Emperor with the right to assume the title of Cæsar. He was a simple soldier and nothing more. Among those who accompanied him was Otho, whom Nero had robbed of his wife. He found the troops discontented with Galba's parsimony and strict discipline, and succeeded in working them up to the point of revolt, when Galba was slain and Otho succeeded him.

His reign, however, was to be brief, for Vitellius had been proclaimed Emperor by his troops almost on the same day that Galba reached Rome. This was in Gaul, and came about because, through his liberality, he had made himself extremely popular with the soldiers. He was drunk all the way to Rome, whither most of his military supporters had preceded him. Arrived there, having routed the forces of Otho on the road, his first act was to deify Nero. After that sacrilege, there was nothing too base for him, and he became such a vile debauchee that he was unable even to act the tyrant. The administration was mostly in the hands of the freedman Asiaticus, though P. Sabinus, brother of Vespasian, was high in authority. Their government was marked by moderation. The legions of Pannonia and Illyricum proclaimed Vespasian Emperor, and advanced into Italy under Antonius Primus. Several battles were fought, and Rome was desolated by violence and bloodshed, till the troops of Primus entered the city. Vitellius was found wandering about his palace in a state of drunken terror, and when he appeared on the streets was pounded to death by the angry mob. His head was carried about Rome, and his body thrown into the Tiber.

Vespasian had left his son Titus to prosecute the siege of Jerusalem, and was joyfully received in Rome, where he set vigorously to work in restoring order. He was a fine soldier, held the troops under firm discipline, improved the finances, co-operated with the Senate, and, best of all, set a good example by his own conduct to his subjects. He was simple in his habits, indifferent to flattery, good-humored and easy of access. Although parsimonious in his private life, he was lavish in embellishing the city with public works, and was a liberal patron of the arts and sciences. He reigned ten years, and died in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

Titus was the eldest son of Vespasian, and through his careful training had become an accomplished scholar and an adept in manly exercises. He was an admirable soldier, and the task which his father left him, of prosecuting the siege of Jerusalem, had been carried through with success. His victory caused the utmost joy in Rome, when the news reached the city. He laid the trophies of victory at his father's feet, and the two were given the honor (A.D. 71) of a joint triumph. Becoming the colleague of his parent in the Empire, Titus made an unfavorable impression by his immoral and cruel conduct. He caused persons whom he suspected of enmity to be put to death, and his liaison with Berenice, daughter of Herod Agrippa, gave great offence to the Romans.

When, however, Titus became emperor, he agreeably disappointed every one. He immediately stopped all persecutions for treasonable words and looks; repaired the ancient and venerated structures of Rome; built new ones, among them the Colosseum and the baths which bear his name, and delighted the

populace by games which lasted one hundred days. The splendid beneficence of his reign was sorely needed, for in 79 occurred the appalling eruption of Vesuvius which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii and many other towns and villages. Herculaneum stood in the Campagna, close to the Bay of Naples. It is not known when it was founded, but its inhabitants took an active part in the social and civil wars of Rome. It was completely buried under a shower of ashes, over which a stream of lava flowed and afterward hardened. The configuration of the coast was so changed that the city was entirely lost for sixteen centuries, when an accident led to the discovery of its ruins in 1713. Twenty-five years later a systematic course of excavation was begun. The interesting relics of antiquity, so far as they were capable of removal, were taken to Naples, and are now deposited, along with other relics from Pompeii, in a large museum attached to the royal palace. They include not only frescoes, statues, and works of art, but articles of household furniture, such as tripods, lamps, chandeliers, basins, mirrors, musical or surgical instruments, and even cooking utensils. Excavations have been resumed of late years with the most interesting results.

Pompeii was about twelve miles southeast from Naples, in the plain at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, and was one of the fashionable provincial cities of the Roman Empire. Though most of the citizens escaped during the incessant bombardment of lava stones, a large number must have perished, as is proved by the finding of the skeletons of soldiers on guard, and citizens apparently overtaken by death in the midst of their usual employments. As in the case of Herculaneum, the discovery of Pompeii in 1750 was accidental, but the excavations have brought to light a living picture of a Roman city more than eighteen hundred years ago, with all its departments of domestic and public life, the worship of the gods, the shows of the arena, architecture, painting, and sculpture, and in short all the appliances of comfort and luxury as they existed in a wealthy community of those remote days.

The year following the destruction of these cities, a three-days' fire in Rome reduced to ashes the Capitol, Augustus' library, Pompey's theatre, and numerous houses, while on the heels of the conflagration came a dreadful pestilence. Titus did everything in his power for the homeless sufferers, even to the despoiling of his palaces of their ornaments to obtain money, and he schemed and planned to find occupation for them. He became the idol of his subjects, the "love and delight of the human race," but at the beginning of the third year of his reign he suddenly fell ill and died, September 13th, 81, his younger brother Domitian being suspected by some of having poisoned him.

Be that as it may, Domitian came to the throne in 81, and ruled till 96. At first, he passed many good laws, governed the provinces carefully, and ad-

ministered justice, but the failure of his campaigns against the Dacians and the Marcomanni (87) soured his whole nature. He became ferocious in his suspicions, jealousy, and hatred; and through murder and banishment, it is said, deprived Rome of nearly all of the citizens conspicuous for their learning, talent, or wealth. He held the army to him by greatly increasing its pay, and won the favor of the people by extravagant gifts and gladiatorial games and shows, in some of which he took part. His cruelties finally became so intolerable that his wife Domitia joined in a conspiracy against him, and he perished from the dagger on the 18th of September, 96.

The Senate immediately elected M. Nerva as his successor, though he was past three-score years of age. He had twice held the honor of the consulship before his election, and displayed great wisdom and moderation. The taxes were lessened, and the administration of justice improved, but his advanced age rendered him unable to repress the insolence of the Prætorian Guards, and he adopted M. Ulpius Trajanus, known as Trajan, who succeeded him on his death, January 27th, 98.

Trajan began his administration by the usual largess to the soldiers, extending the same to the Roman citizens and their families, and he made large provision out of the imperial treasury for the upbringing of the children of poor freemen in Rome and other Italian towns. It was in the year 101 that Rome beheld, for the first time, its Emperor leading forth its legions in person upon their career of conquest. Trajan then set out on his first campaign against the Dacians, who had compelled Rome since the time of Domitian to pay them tribute. The struggle was long and severe, but was completely successful (104-105), and Dacia became a royal province. This was the first conquest since the death of Augustus, and was celebrated on Trajan's return to Rome by a triumph and splendid games which lasted for four months.

Trajan's appetite for foreign conquest was whetted by his success, and in 106 he again set out for the East. Landing in Syria, he moved northward, receiving the submission of numerous princes on the way, and occupying Armenia, which he made a province of the Empire. Though he was busy for the succeeding seven years, we have no clear record of what he did. Once more he went to Syria in 115, his objective point being the Parthian empire. Its capital hardly offered the semblance of resistance, and he descended the Tigris subduing the tribes on both banks, and being the first and only Roman general to navigate the Persian Gulf. When he returned, he found it necessary to re-conquer Mesopotamia, North Syria, and Arabia, and he did it more thoroughly than before. By this time he was in a sad bodily condition from dropsy and paralysis, and, while on the return to Italy, died at Selinus, in Cilicia, in August, 117.



Although so much of Trajan's reign was taken up with his military campaigns, his administration of civil affairs was admirable. Equal justice was secured to all; the imperial finances were greatly improved, and peculation on the part of public officers was severely punished. One of the fads of the Roman emperors was the improvement and beautifying of Rome, and none did more thorough work in that respect than Trajan. The Empire was traversed in all directions by military routes; canals and bridges were built, new towns arose, the Via Appia was restored, the Pontine Marshes partially drained, the "Forum Trajani" erected, and the harbor of Civita Vecchia constructed. A striking proof of the sincerity of this Emperor's labors to improve the condition of his subjects was shown in the wish, which it became the fashion formally to utter, on the accession of each of his successors: "May he be happier than Augustus, better than Trajan."

Trajan died childless, and his successor was P. Ælius Hadrianus, or Hadrian, the son of Trajan's cousin. He had not only displayed great ability in the various high offices he filled, but he was a favorite of the empress. Trajan had the right to name his heir, and when the empress announced that it was Hadrian, the citizens and Senate accepted him without murmur.

The Empire at this time was in a critical condition. There were insurrections in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria; the barbarian hordes were swarming into Moesia in the east and Muritania in the west, and the turbulent Parthians had once more asserted their independence and administered several defeats to the imperial forces.

Looking calmly at the situation which confronted him, Hadrian was convinced that a peaceful policy was the true one. He decided to limit the Roman boundaries in the East, and concluded a peace with the Parthians by which he surrendered all the country beyond the Euphrates to them. Returning to Rome in 118, he treated the people liberally, but suppressed with relentless severity a patrician conspiracy against his life. He then, by means of large gifts, induced the Roxolani, who are the modern Russians, to retire from Moesia which they had invaded.

The year 119 saw the beginning of Hadrian's remarkable journey, most of which he is said to have performed on foot. He visited Gaul, Germany, Britain, Spain, Mauritania, Egypt, Greece, and Asia Minor. In Britain, he built the wall which extends from the Solway to the Tyne, and did not return to Rome until after seven years, when he received the title of *Pater Patriæ*. He was so fond of the city of Athens that he spent the years 132 and 133 there. Making another visit to Syria, he came back to Italy, and passed the remainder of his life around Rome, dying July 10th, 138, at Baïæ.

The vigor and thoroughness with which Hadrian reorganized and disciplined

the army remove all thought that his peaceful policy was attributable to fear or weakness. He did more than any emperor to consolidate the monarchical system of Rome. He divided Italy into four parts, each under a consul, to whom was entrusted the administration of justice. Among the numerous splendid edifices he erected was the mausoleum called the *Moles Hadriani*, the Ælian bridge leading to it, and the splendid villa at Tibur. He also laid the foundation of several cities, the most important of which was Adrianopolis. He placed a high value on Greek literature, and was a lover and patron of the fine arts.

Hadrian adopted as his heir T. Aurelius Antoninus, of excellent abilities and in middle life. Him Hadrian required to select two heirs, M. Annius, his own sister's son, and Lucius Verus, the child of his late comrade. Antoninus Pius (the Senate having added the latter name) had served Hadrian as proconsul in Asia, where the gentle wisdom of his rule gave him a higher reputation than any of his predecessors. He inherited great wealth and made one of the best emperors who ever ruled imperial Rome. He was simple, temperate, and kind, his highest object being that of benefiting his people, who looked up to him as in the truest sense the father of his country. His mild hand partly stayed the persecution of the Christians which was continued during his reign. Fond of peace, the only important war in which he engaged was against Britain, where the Roman power was extended. He also built a wall between the Forth and the Clyde, as a check against the predatory tribes of the north. He was so widely known for his integrity and justice that he was often employed to arbitrate in the affairs of foreign states. To his wisdom, kindness, and unvarying courtesy was due the freedom of his vast empire from insurrections, violence, conspiracies, and bloodshed. It may be said in brief that he furnished a model for those who came after him, though, sad to say, few were able to measure up to his splendid standard. He died in 161, and was succeeded by Marcus Annius, called Aurelius, who, as we have learned, had been selected as his heir at the command of Hadrian.

Aurelius had been made consul in 140, and, up to his accession to the throne, he discharged the duties with faithfulness and ability. He and the Emperor had been the closest of friends. Aurelius, on becoming Emperor, showed his chivalry of character by voluntarily sharing the government with young Lucius Verus, who from that time bore the title of Lucius Aurelius Verus. Such a ruler as Aurelius was sure to win the respect and love of his subjects, but Lucius, when sent to take part in the Parthian War, remained in Antioch, sunk in debasing pleasures, leaving his officers to prosecute the struggle, and at the close he returned home and enjoyed the triumph to which he had no claim. The troops brought a pestilence, which, together with appalling

inundations and earthquakes, laid much of the city in ruins, and destroyed the granaries where the supplies of corn were kept. A formidable insurrection had long been fomenting in the German provinces; the Britons were on the point of revolt, and the Catti (the Suevi of Julius Cæsar, who lived in the country nearly corresponding to the present Hesse) were ready to devastate the Rhenish provinces.

The manifold calamities that had fallen and still threatened to fall so terrified the Romans that, to allay them, Marcus determined to go forth to war himself. For a time Marcus and Lucius were completely successful. The Marcomanni and the other rebellious tribes, living between Illyria and the sources of the Danube, were compelled to sue for peace in 168, the year preceding the death of Lucius. The contest was renewed in 170, and, with little intermission, lasted throughout the life of the Emperor. Marcus carried on the campaign with amazing vigor and skill, and nearly annihilated the Marcomanni and the Jazyges.

Connected with this war was a victory so unprecedented that some historians accept it as a miracle. According to Dion Cassius, the Romans were perishing of thirst and heat, on a summer day in 174, when, without warning, the flaming sky was darkened by a black cloud from which the cooling rain descended in torrents. The feverish soldiers abandoned themselves to the life-giving draughts, when the barbarians assailed them with furious energy, and assuredly would have annihilated them, had not a storm of hail and fire descended upon the assailants alone, and scattered them in headlong terror. So profound indeed was the dread inspired that the Germanic tribes hastened from all directions to make their submission and to beg for mercy.

This astounding occurrence could hardly be believed were it not established by every soldier of a large army, and by Aurelius himself, who was incapable of falsehood. It certainly was one of the strangest incidents in history.

At this juncture, a new outbreak occurred in the East, brought about by the shocking treachery of the Emperor's own wife. This wicked woman urged to rebellion the governor, Avidius Cassius, a descendant of the Cassius who had slain Cæsar. The Emperor, though in poor health, was obliged to leave Pannonia with the least possible delay. Cassius seized the whole of Asia Minor, but was slain by his own soldiers. Marcus Aurelius expressed his sorrow that the fates had thus deprived him of the happiness of pardoning the man who had conspired against his happiness. He exhibited the same magnanimity on his arrival in the East, where he refused to read the papers of Cassius, and ordered them to be burned, so that he might not be led to suspect any one of being a traitor. He treated the provinces with such gentleness that he won their love and disarmed them of all enmity. While he was thus engaged,



his disloyal wife died in an obscure village, and the husband paid her every honor.

On his way back to Rome, he visited Lower Egypt and Greece, and by his noble efforts in behalf of his subjects won their profound gratitude. In Athens he founded chairs of philosophy for each of the four chief sects—Platonic, Stoic, Peripatetic, and Epicurean. Reaching Italy, he celebrated his bloodless triumph on the 23d of December, 176. Fresh disturbances having broken out in Germany, he went thither in the following autumn and was again successful. But his weak constitution by this time was shattered by the hardships, sufferings, and anxiety he had borne so long. He died either at Vienna or at Sirmium, on March 17th, 180.



JUPITER BRINGING RAIN TO THE ROMAN ARMY

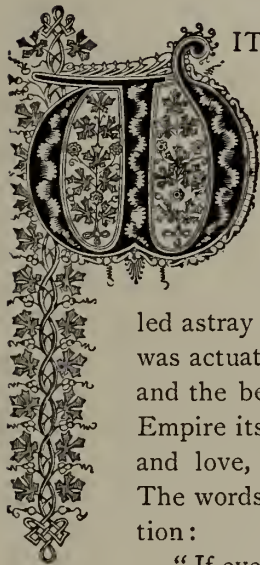




VICTORY OF CONSTANTINE OVER MAXENTIUS

## Chapter XL

### THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY



WITH all that has been said of that extraordinary man and emperor, Marcus Aurelius, justice requires mention of a feature of his character which the reader probably has not suspected,—that is, his hostility to Christianity. He was a persecutor of the new religion, and must have known of the cruelties perpetrated upon the believers. There have been many explanations of his course, the generally accepted one being that he was led astray by evil counsellors, but the more probable cause is that he was actuated by his earnestness in the heathen faith of his ancestors, and the belief that the new doctrine threatened to undermine the Empire itself. He did not comprehend the religion of gentleness and love, and thought it his duty to extirpate the dangerous sect. The words of John Stuart Mill on this point are worthy of quotation:

“If ever any one possessed of power had grounds for thinking himself the best and most enlightened among his contemporaries, it was the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Absolutely monarch of the whole civilized world, he preserved through life not only the most unblemished justice, but, what was less to be expected from his stoical breeding, the tenderest heart. The few failings which are to be attributed to him were all on the side of indulgence; while his writings, the highest ethical product of the ancient mind, differ scarcely perceptibly, if they differ at all, from the most characteristic teachings of Christ. This man, a better Christian, in all but the dogmatic sense of the word, than almost any of

the ostensibly Christian sovereigns who have since reigned, persecuted Christianity. Placed at the summit of all the previous attainments of humanity, with an open, unfettered intellect, and a character which led him, of himself, to embody in his moral writings the Christian ideal, he yet failed to see Christianity was to be a good and not an evil in the world, with his duties to which he was so deeply penetrated. Existing society he knew to be in a deplorable state. But such as it was, he saw, or thought he saw, that it was held together, and prevented from being worse, by belief and reverence of the received divinities. As a ruler of mankind, he deemed it his duty not to suffer society to fall in pieces, and saw not how, if its existing ties were removed, any others could be formed which would again knit it together. The new religion aimed openly at dissolving these ties; unless, therefore, it was his duty to adopt that religion, it seemed to be his duty to put it down. Inasmuch, then, as the theology of Christianity did not appear to him true, or of divine origin; inasmuch as this strange history of a crucified God was not credible to him, and a system which purported to rest entirely upon a foundation to him so wholly unbelievable, could not be foreseen by him to be that renovating agency which, after all abatements, it has in fact proved to be; the gentlest and most amiable of philosophers and rulers, under a solemn sense of duty, authorized the persecution of Christianity. To my mind, this is one of the most tragical facts in all history. It is a bitter thought, how different a thing the Christianity of the world might have been if the Christian faith had been adopted as the religion of the Empire, under the auspices of Marcus Aurelius, instead of those of Constantine. But it would be equally unjust to him, and false to truth, to deny, that no one plea which can be urged for punishing anti-Christian teaching was wanting to Marcus Aurelius for punishing, as he did, the propagation of Christianity. No Christian more firmly believes that atheism is false, and tends to the dissolution of society, than Marcus Aurelius believed the same things of Christianity; he who, of all men then living, might have been thought the most capable of appreciating it. Unless any one who approves of punishment for the promulgation of opinions, flatters himself that he is a wiser and better man than Marcus Aurelius—more deeply versed in the wisdom of his time—more elevated in his intellect above it—more earnest in his search for truth—let him abstain from that assumption of the joint infallibility of himself and the multitude, which the great Aurelius made with so unfortunate a result."

The foregoing extract may introduce one of the most important facts connected with the history of the Roman Empire: that is, the spread of Christianity within its confines. The variety of peoples had a variety of religions, but all, with the exception of the Jews, were pagans and polytheists, or believers in many gods. Such was the spiritual state of the myriads of human beings,

when Christ was born in an obscure corner of the dominion of Augustus, and when the seed was sown whose harvest no man could foresee or dream of in his wildest imaginings.

The propagation of the new faith was marked by ferocious persecutions. We have learned of the first one, which was that by the fiendish Nero, who aimed to turn suspicion against the Christians as the incendiaries of Rome, in order to hide his own guilt. Tacitus, the great Roman historian, who was born under Nero, says of this diabolical infamy: "Some were nailed on crosses, others sewn up in the skins of wild beasts and exposed to the fury of dogs; others again smeared over with combustible materials were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night. The gardens of Nero were destined for the melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied with a horse-race, and honored with the presence of the Emperor, who mingled with the populace in the dress and attitude of a charioteer."

Now it may be asked why the Romans, who permitted innumerable religions to flourish within their Empire, concentrated their furious persecutions upon the Christians. The main cause was the proselyting ardor of the Christians themselves. The believer in that faith was taught as one of its basic duties that he must not selfishly absorb it unto himself, but do all he could to persuade his brethren to share it with him. Its very nature, therefore, made it aggressive, while the numerous pagan faiths were passive. Christianity did what no other faith did. It boldly taught that all the gods of the Romans were false, and that it was a sin to bow down to them. Not only that, but it did its utmost to lead all others to think the same. The early Christians held their meetings secretly and at night, and this was looked upon with disfavor by the authorities, who saw the germs of danger in the practice. But, as has been said, the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church, and as we progress in the history of the Roman Empire, this truth will manifest itself again and again.

The reader has gone sufficiently far through these pages to note another fact: the real power of the Empire lay in the soldiery who stood behind the throne. We have learned of the insolence of the Prætorian Guards, who dared to insult an emperor to his face, and who did not hesitate to make and unmake sovereigns at will, with the Senate always ready to record and accept the decree of the soldiers. Inasmuch as each new ruler signalized his accession to the throne by distributing largesses, it followed that the more emperors there were, the greater would be the gifts distributed. So the troops became addicted to deposing emperors and selecting new ones. The man fixed upon for the purple was usually a favorite general, and as there were plenty of them, it followed that Rome sometimes had several emperors at the same time. No man dared aspire to the crown without the backing of the soldiers.



The only accession of territory by Rome during the first century of the Christian era was Britain. In the words of Gibbon: "After a war of about forty years, undertaken by the most stupid (Claudius), maintained by the most dissolute (Nero), and terminated by the most timid (Domitian) of all the emperors, the greater part of the island of Britain submitted to the Roman yoke." We remember the addition of the province of Dacia by Trajan in the early part of the second century.

One cruel amusement of the Romans was their gladiatorial fights, which date from their earliest history. The popularity of these increased, till the time came when magistrates, public officers, and candidates for the popular suffrage gave shows to the people, which consisted mainly of the bloody and generally fatal encounters; but no earlier leaders equalled the emperors in providing the people with the fearful exhibitions. In one given by Julius Cæsar, three hundred and twenty couples engaged in combat. In the terrific display offered by Trajan, lasting one hundred and twenty-three days, ten thousand gladiators were exhibited at once, and two thousand fought with and killed one another, or contended with wild beasts for the amusement of the seventy thousand spectators in the Colosseum, who included every grade of society from the highest to the lowest.

Sinewy, athletic slaves were brought from all parts of the dominions and trained for the combats, as horses have been trained in later times for races. There were so many gladiators during the conspiracy of Catiline that they were deemed dangerous to the public safety, and the proposal was made to distribute them among the different garrisons. The exhibitions became so numerous that efforts were made to limit the number of gladiators. Cicero advocated a law forbidding any one giving a show for one or two years before becoming a candidate for public office, and Augustus prohibited more than two shows a year, or the giving of one by a person worth less than twenty thousand dollars; but the passion was so strong that it was impossible to keep the terrible exhibitions within moderate limits.

A gladiatorial show was announced by pictures and show-bills, after the fashion of modern theatrical plays. All the trained contestants were sworn to fight to the death, and the display of cowardice was followed by fatal tortures. The fighting at first was with wooden swords, which soon gave place to steel weapons. When one of the combatants had disarmed his opponent, he placed his foot on his body, and looked at the Emperor, if present, or to the people, for the signal of life or death. If they raised their thumbs, he was spared; if they turned them down, he was slain. The gladiator who conquered was rewarded with a palm and in some cases with his freedom. At first the gladiators were slaves, but afterward freemen and even knights entered the arena.





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